

Morphological Causatives and Argument Structure in Kavalan*

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1. Introduction

Traditionally causatives fall into three major types in terms of their morphosyntax, that is, lexical, morphological, and syntactic (or periphrastic, analytic). (see Kulikov 2001). One of the most widely discussed topics concerning causative constructions is the casing marking in their argument structure. To deal with this syntactic issue two major approaches have been proposed, with one focusing on grammatical relations (Comrie 1976) and the other appealing to semantic roles (Cole 1983, Kemmer and Verhagen 1994).

In Kavalan, as in other Austronesian languages, there is a highly productive morpheme “*pa*”, which causativizes a predicate stem. For instance, *qan* means ‘eat’ while *pa-qan* ‘cause to eat’; likewise *suRaw* ‘fall’ and *pa-suRaw* ‘cause to fall’. This paper endeavors to investigate the case marking of the arguments of ‘*pa*’-marked predicates in Kavalan. It is suggested that a plausible explanation can be sought if we treat Kavalan as a pure ergative language, following Li (1996) and Liao (2002), and view causative clauses as modeled on simple non-causative ones, as convincingly demonstrated by Kemmer and Verhagen (1994).

In addition to this introduction in Section 1, the organization of this paper is as follows: Section 2 reviews two approaches to the syntax of causative constructions, Section 3 illustrates Kavalan as a pure ergative language, Section 4 presents the case

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marking in causative construction, and finally Section 5 summarizes the whole discussion and forwards some suggestion for further research.

2. Literature Review

To deal with the case marking and argument structure in causative constructions many approaches have been proposed. (cf. Comrie 1976, Cole 1983, Foley and Van Valin 1984, Ackerman 1994, Song 1996, among others) Of these Comrie's (1976) Case Hierarchy and Cole's (1983) Agency Hierarchy seem to be the most frequently discussed ones.

Focusing on grammatical relations, Comrie (1976) suggested "paradigm case" to account for the syntactic changes brought about by causativization. In his paradigm, there is a case hierarchy of syntactic relations, as formulated in (1). The causee, outcast by the causer that occupies the subject position, is demoted to the left-most position available in this hierarchy. An illustration of the case hierarchy comes from French, taken from Comrie (1976: 262-263) and reproduced in (2), where the syntactic role of the causee in each example is specified. The case assigned to the causee is gradually demoted right-ward along the hierarchy as the valency of the base predicate increases from monoadic (*courir* in 2a) to dyadic (*manger* in 2b) and finally triadic (*écrire* in 2c).

- (1) Comrie's Case Hierarchy (1976):
Subject > Direct Object > Indirect Object > Oblique Object
- (2) a. Je ferai courir Henriette. (DO)
'I shall make Henriette run.'
- b. Je ferai manger les gâteaux à Jean. (IO)
'I shall make Jean eat the cakes.'
- c. Je ferai écrire une lettre au directeur par Jean. (Oblique Object)
'I shall make Jean write a letter to the director.'

Descriptive and even predictive as Comrie's hierarchy may seem, there are however many exceptions to his paradigm case, not only cross-linguistically but also within languages claimed to observe (1). As a contrast to (2b), for instance, the alternative marking for causee in (2d) causes some problem for Comrie's hierarchy since the causee "*Jean*" is demoted further than necessary. Extended demotion like this as well as syntactic doubling (where two core arguments assume the same syntactic role) brings linguists to take semantic roles into consideration. According to Cole (1983), the case assignment for the causee is not determined by syntactic relations of the caused event, but instead by its semantic roles in a causal event, as captured by the Agency Hierarchy in (3), where the agentivity (and autonomy) of the causee decreases from left to right. In light of this view, the contrast between (2b) and (2d) turns out to be a mere difference between the agentivity of the causee in a causal event, with the causee in (2d) more agent-like than that in (2b) (since in French *par* marks the agent in passive voice and *à* usually marks a non-agentive experiencer).

(2) d. Je ferai manger les gâteaux par Jean. (Oblique Object)

'I shall make the cakes eaten by Jean.'

(3) Cole's Agency Hierarchy (1983):

Agent > Experiencer > Patient

In line with Cole, Kemmer and Verhagen (1994) convincingly demonstrated that the argument structure of causative clauses can be better understood if modeled on that of simple non-causative ones. To be exact, the causer and causee in intransitive causative clauses (i.e. IC clauses where the predicate of the caused event is intransitive) correspond to the agent and patient in simple transitive clauses respectively, in terms of both case marking and degree of agency. Likewise, the causer, causee, and affectee in transitive causative clauses (i.e. TC clauses where the

predicate of the caused event is transitive) correspond to the agent, experiencer/recipient/instrument (usually marked with dative or instrumental), and affectee in simple three-participant clauses. The correspondence relationship between simple and causative clauses is visualized in Figure 1 below. We will find out in Section 4 how this correspondence model may shed light on the argument structure of causative clauses in Kavalan.

Simple Transitive Clause:	Agent	Patient	Vt	
IC Clause :	Causer	Causee	[Vcaus Vi]	

Simple 3-Participant Clause :	Agent	Dative/Instrumental	Patient	V ₃
TC Clause :	Cause	Causee	Affectee	[Vcaus Vt]

Vi = Intransitive Verb Vt = Transitive Verb
Vcaus = Causative Verb V₃ = 3-Participant Verb

Figure 1. *Correspondence between simple and causative clauses*
(Kemmer & Verhagen 1994: 126)

3. Kavalan as an Ergative Language

Despite the controversy over the status of Kavalan as an accusative, ergative, or split ergative language (cf. Li 1978 and 1996, Chang 1997, and Liao 2002), a plausible explanation of the causative constructions can be sought if we view Kavalan as a pure ergative language, following Li (1996) and Liao (2002). In light of their view, Kavalan demonstrates a S(ubject)/P(atient) pivot in case marking with A(gent) marked with ergative and S/P with absolute, as illustrated in Figure 2 below.¹

¹ The terms “Subject”, “Agent”, and “Patient” refer to the configuration in Figure 2, intended to be distinguished from the general use of “subject”, “agent”, and “patient” respectively.

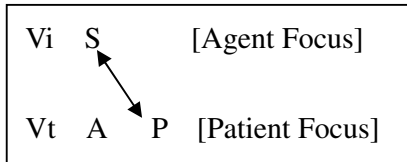


Figure 2. *Kavalan as an Ergative Language*

The case makers for core arguments are schematized as (4), where parentheses stand for optionality and Gen for genitive.² A pair of simple sentences is subsequently provided in (5).³

(4) Markings for Core Arguments:

- a. Absolute: (a/ya) + NP
- b. Ergative : Gen + ((ni) + NP)

(5) a. me-tawa a/ya sunis
AF-laugh Abs child

‘The child is laughing.’ (Chang 2000: 68)

b. tawa-an-na sunis a/ya tama-na
laugh-PF-3rd.sg.Gen child Abs father-his

‘The child is laughing at his father.’ (Chang 2000: 69)

As for the oblique case of peripheral arguments, proper names (PN) can be optionally marked by *tu* or the locative suffix *-an* with the latter more frequently seen than the former while other NPs are obligatorily marked by *tu*, as schematized in (6). Examples for each situation are given in (7) and (8), where the Greek letter Φ represents zero marking.

(6) Markings for Obliques:

- A. PN : a. (tu) ci + PN
- b. ci + PN(-an)

B. Others: *tu* + NP

² As much as “*ci*” in other cases, “*ni*” marks proper names only.

³ All the Kavalan data in this paper are elicited during the 2004 fieldwork at Shinshe in Hualiang County, financed by Graduate Institute of Linguistics, NTU, unless otherwise specified.

- (7) a. p-um-ukun Φ ci tuyaw (tu) ci utay
hit-AF-hit Abs CI PN Obl CI PN
‘Tuyaw is hitting Utay.’ (Chang 2000: 72)
- b. t-em-anuz Φ ci utay ci ipay-(an)⁴
chase-AF-chase Abs CI PN CI PN-Loc
‘Utay is chasing Ipay.’
- (8) q-em-an tu Raq Φ ci utay
drink-AF-drink Obl wine Abs CI PN
‘Utay drank wine.’

4. Case Marking in Causative Construction

In this section, we are going to investigate the case marking in causative construction and contrast it with non-causative counterparts in the hope that some relationship between the two might be detected as Kemmer and Verhagen (1994) have suggested. The investigation of causatives in Agent Focus is followed by that of causatives in Patient Focus.

4.1 Causatives in Agent Focus

To start with, compare the two examples in (9), where an extra argument, the causer, is introduced in the latter. The Subject “*utay*” in (9a) is demoted into an oblique in (9b) since the causer “*buya*” is now the Subject marked with absolute.

- (9) a. me-suRaw Φ ci utay
AF-fall Abs CI PN
‘Utay fell down.’
- b. pa-suRaw ci utay-an Φ ci buya
CAU-fall CI PN-Loc Abs CI PN
= pa-suRaw Φ ci buya ci utay(-an)
‘Buya made Utay fall down.’

⁴ When the locative marker left out, it is always the post-verbal NP that is the Agent.

Next, a comparison of (9b) with a dyadic non-causative sentence in (10a) will reveal that the causer and causee in the former correspond to the Subject and oblique in the latter respectively.

- (10) a. kaibasi tu qulus Φ ci buya
 (AF)wash Obl clothes Abs CI PN
 ‘Buya did the laundry.’
- b. pa-kaibasi tu qulus Φ ci imuy ci buya-an
 CAU-wash Obl clothes Abs CI PN CI PN-Loc
 = pa-kaibasi Φ ci imuy tu qulus ci buya(-an)
 ‘Imuy made Buya do the laundry.’

In turn, when a new argument introduced into (10a), the Subject “*buya*” is again demoted into an oblique, replaced by the causer “*imuy*” in (10b). By comparing (10b) with a triadic non-causative sentence in (11a), a close correspondence between causatives and non-causatives can be identified. More specifically, the most agentive arguments (the causer in a causing event and the donor in a donating event) are both marked with absolute and the rest of the arguments with oblique.

- (11) a. bula timaiku Φ ci utay tu u'-siq babui
 (AF)give Obl.1st.sg Abs CI PN Obl Class-one pig
 ‘Utay gave me a pig.’
- b. pa-bula Φ ci siulan ci utay(-an) tu u'-siq babui timaiku(an)
 CAU-give Abs CI PN CI PN-Loc Obl Class-one pig Obl.1st.sg
 = ci siulan pa-bula ci utay(-an) tu u'-siq babui timaikuan
 = ci siulan pa-bula tu u'-siq babui ti utay timaikuan
 ‘Siulan had Utay give me a pig.’

According to the pattern of causativization in (9) and (10), it is expected that the Subject “*utay*” in (11a) will be marked with oblique if a causer is introduced, which is exactly what happens in (11b). Worth pointing out is the fact that if the causer, causee,

and recipient are all proper names and dispense with the locative marker “-an” linear order will be crucial in deciding which PN assumes what semantic role. In this case, as confirmed by our informants, the causer ought to precede the causee, which in turn ought to precede the recipient (cf. Note 3). An iconic principle seems to be working on here since physically (and perhaps conceptually as well) the force-dynamics in a causal event is transferred from the causer, through the causee, and eventually to the recipient.

To summarize, when the Subject in non-causative clauses in Agent Focus turns into the causee in their causative counterparts, the absolute slot is then occupied by the causer. All the semantic roles in a causal event, except the causer, are marked by oblique, much as are all the peripheral arguments in a non-causative clause. Figure 3 demonstrates the correspondence between causative and non-causative clauses. Note that the hierarchy of semantic roles in causative clauses confirms not only to the agency hierarchy proposed by Cole (1983) and Kemmer & Verhagen (1994), but also to the iconic principle reflected in Kavalan syntax. On the other hand, in addition to structural coding, the conceptual resemblance between the Subject in non-causative clauses and the causer in causative clauses lies in their highest degree of agentivity and autonomy in carrying out certain events.

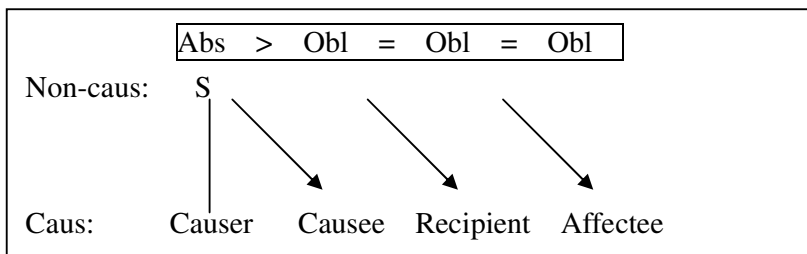


Figure 3. *Correspondence between causative and non-causative clauses in AF*

4.2 Causatives in Patient Focus

Unlike in Agent Focus, the case marking of causatives in Patient Focus is somehow more complicated. First of all, returning back to (5b), renumbered here as (12a), we are expecting to discover, as in Agent Focus, a similar pattern between causatives and non-causatives. A comparison between (12a) and (12b) satisfies our expectation since the Agent and Patient in the former correspond to the causer and causee in the latter, in terms of both structural coding and agency hierarchy.

- (12) a. tawa-an-na sunis a/ya tama-na
 laugh-PF-3rd.sg.Gen child Abs father-his
 ‘The child is laughing at his father.’ (Chang 2000: 69)
- b. pa-suRaw-an-na ni buya Φ ci utay
 CAU-fall-PF-3rd.sg.Gen NI PN Abs CI PN
 ‘Buya made Utay fall down’

Subsequently, a similar correspondence can be found when it comes to the comparison between a triadic non-causative clause and a triadic causative one, as shown in (13).

- (13) a. bul-an-na-iku ni buya tu u-’siq babui
 give-PF-3rd.sg.Gen-1st.sg.Abs NI PN Obl Class-one pig
 ‘Buya gave me a pig.
- b. pa-qaway-an-na-iku ni siulan tu beRas
 CAU-carry-PF-1st.sg.Gen-1st.sg.Abs NI PN Obl rice
 ‘Siulan had me carry [a bag of] rice.’

Last but most important of all, the comparison between (13a) and (14) is especially informative in that it reveals us a complete picture of the correspondence between causatives and non-causatives. On one hand, the Agent “*buya*” and Patient “*-iku*” in (13a) correspond to the causer “*siulan*” and causee “*buya*” respectively in (14), and on the other the ergative and absolute in (13a) are demoted into absolute and oblique

respectively in (14), as abstracted in Figure 4. The consistency in Figure 3 and 4, whether the grammatical relations hierarchy enclosed within the mini-square or the agency hierarchy exemplified in causative and non-causative clauses, strengthens the plausibility and reliability of our analysis.

- (14) pa-bula-an-na ni siulan Φ ci buya tu u-'siq babui timaikuan
 CAU-give-PF-3rd.sg.Gen NI PN Abs CI PN Obl Class-one pig Obl.1st.sg.
 'Siulan had Buya give me a pig.'

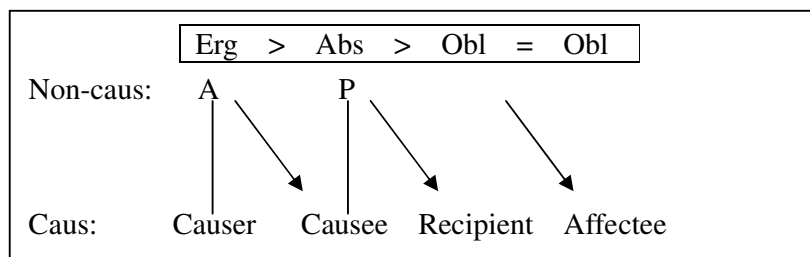


Figure 4. *Correspondence between causative and non-causative clauses in PF*

5. Conclusion

In this paper, we investigate the argument structure of the morphological causatives in Kavalan, and suggest Kavalan be viewed as a pure ergative language, following Li (1996) and Liao (2002) so as to arrive at a plausible explanation of the mechanism of case marking in both causative and non-causative clauses. It is found that causative clauses are indeed modeled on their non-causative counterparts, as Kemmer and Verhagen (1994) have proposed. Enlightened by Comrie (1976) and Cole (1983), we take into consideration both grammatical relations and semantic roles in mapping the case assignment between causative and non-causative clauses, giving rise to two hierarchies: (a) Ergative>Absolute>Oblique and (b) Causer>Causee>Recipient>Affectee.

Since this paper is no more than a preliminary study on the causatives within one language, we are looking forward to more efforts paid to the cross-linguistic

investigation of causatives, especially comparison and contrast among other Austronesian languages. As eloquently spelt out by Shibatani (2001:1), “no grammatical description can be complete without a discussion of causative constructions, because every human language seems to possess a means of expressing the notion of causation, and this ubiquity, in turn, indicates the fundamental nature of this cognitive category.”

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